

systems. Various states and municipalities sought to further that particular idea, but it came to be seen that the convenience of the public would be better served by having one system in a community; this meant creating a monopoly. In some cities, these utilities which have been made into monopolies, have remained in private hands or passed to the ownership, or to the ownership and control of the state or municipality, as the needs of the people generally could best be served. The point, however, I wish to bring out is this: where you have government ownership or control to-day, you have something that is being operated in accordance with the prevailing social order and economic system, not something being operated as it would be under the socialistic state that is proposed. Under public ownership as it is carried on to-day there remains the payment of interest to those who have invested their means and savings in particular industries; there remains the payment of salaries to managers according to the ability and availability of managers, and there remains the payment of wages under a competitive system whereby wages may differ in accordance with the quality and the amount of the service rendered. But if we had public ownership under a socialist state such as is proposed, public ownership would be changed in all of these particulars because, as I have already indicated, it is part of the doctrine of socialism to do away with the payment of any interest and the payment of any salaries and to bring everything down to a level of remuneration on a basis that those who control the state would themselves determine. I think it is important that that distinction should be made very clear.

Then there is another distinction which I think should be made clear. It is that opposition to socialism or a socialist state is not to be regarded as implying opposition to so-called social or humanitarian legislation. Neither is it to be inferred that because humanitarian legislation is a desirable thing, and because the state has gone a long way in enacting so-called social legislation with regard to such matters as workmen's compensation, unemployment invalidity or accident insurance, old age pensions, mothers' allowances and the like, that because one favours legislation of that kind which is not infrequently termed "socialistic," one necessarily favours a socialist state.

Social legislation of the kind I have mentioned is based on the assumption that individual initiative and enterprise will continue under the existing social order. These are developed under the system of private

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

property with its reward for service which permits individuals to take great risks with the possibility of great reward or great failure. It is thought that on the whole human society is apt to progress more where that opportunity is given. The fact however, that this form of legislation has been enacted is evidence that society is wholly alive to the need of competition being controlled and alive also to the necessity at all times of seeking the greatest good for the greatest number. Unrestrained or unrestricted competition is no longer believed in anywhere. Freedom cannot exist, except where competition is in some manner controlled.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that if these facts are thoroughly understood, much of the support that many are inclined to give to this resolution will not be forthcoming. I think there are many well-meaning men and women throughout the country who to-day are supporting my hon. friends in their advocacy of state socialism in the belief that it will mean more in the way of social and humanitarian legislation and more in the way of public ownership. But I would point out that all that there is of public ownership up to the present, and all that there is of social legislation up to the present, has come about under the system of private property and competition and under a social order based thereon such as we have to-day. What I submit is necessary, and quite self-evidently necessary, is not that we should in order to remedy existing conditions seek to change the whole basis of our social and economic structure, but that we should go on with our social and humanitarian legislation, and go on with our public ownership and operation in the directions in which they may appear to be desirable and necessary, considering each proposed measure on its merits, in the light of conditions as they exist at the particular time.

May I say that that has been the method of Liberalism through the years. Most of the social legislation on the statute books of different countries throughout the world to-day is the result of great Liberal battles, great battles in which the particular interest has been subordinated to the general interest, great battles to give first place to the well being of the many, rather than to the privileges of the few. While it may be, and undoubtedly is true, that we have not yet reached the end of the need for legislation of that kind, I submit that we shall improve conditions infinitely more quickly and more effectively in the end by continuing in that way, a step at a time, as the opportunity presents itself, than by at-